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AND
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JULY, 1953
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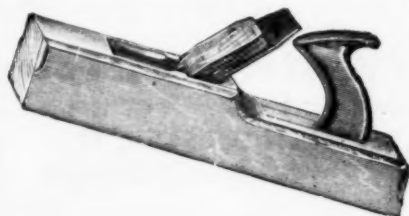
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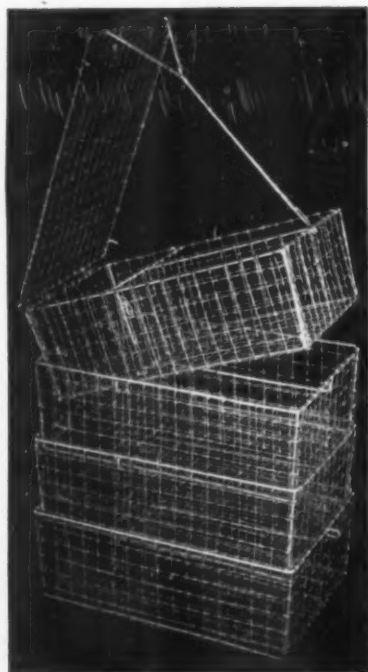
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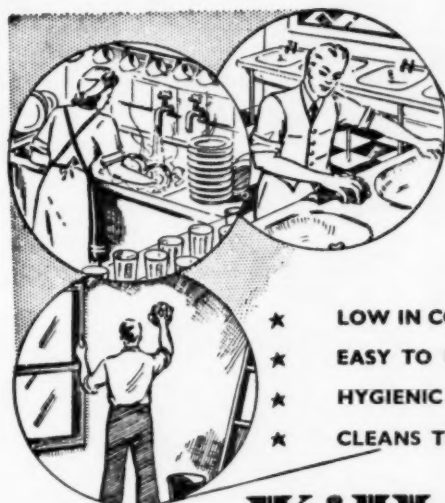
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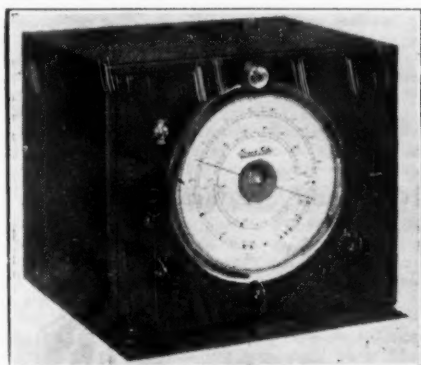
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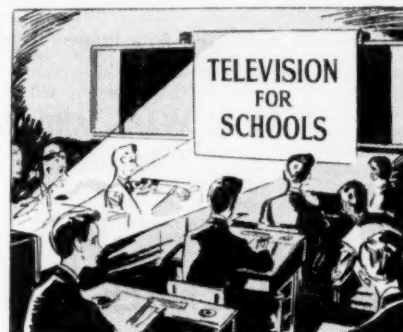
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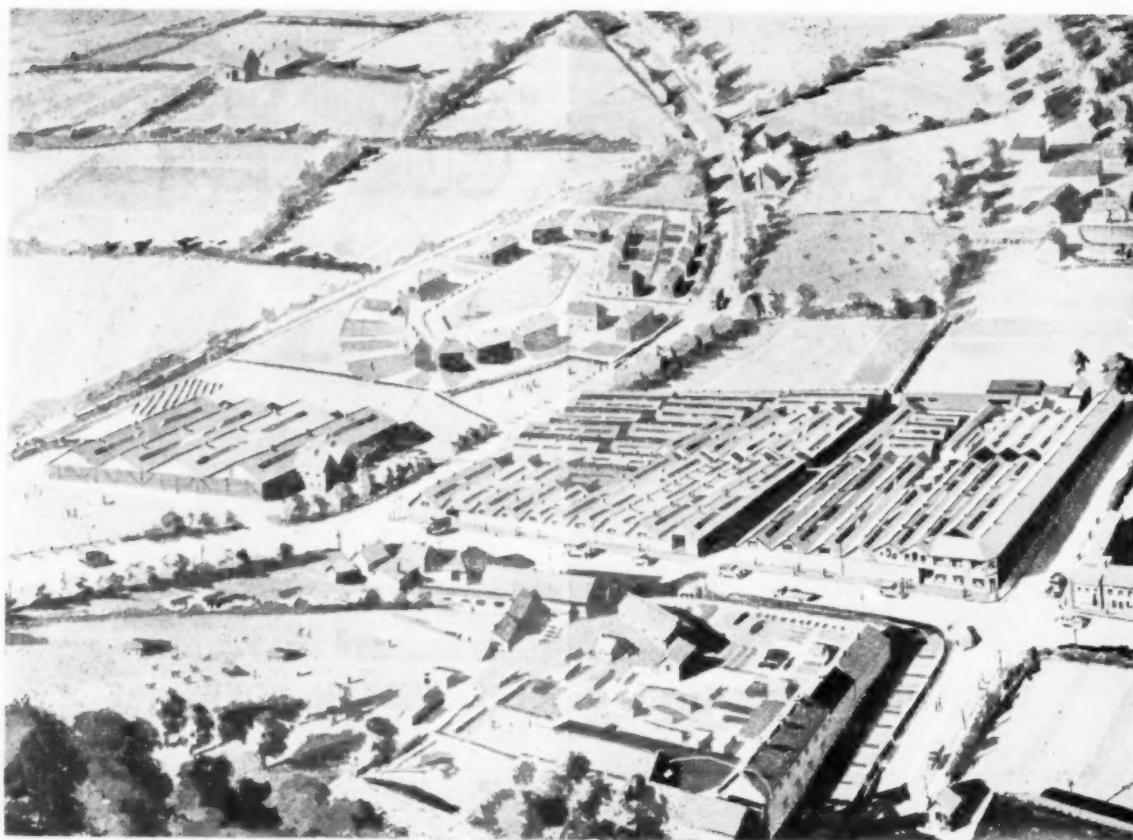


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No. 3,336. VOL. CXLVI.

JULY, 1953

A.E.C. Fifty Years Jubilee

President Reviews Work of Half Century

Mr. Alderman J. Williams, J.P., M.A., Chairman of the Liverpool Education Committee, was, at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Education Committees this month, re-elected president for the ensuing year.

Expressing his gratitude and pride on his re-election, Alderman Williams was also conscious of the honour bestowed upon him in such a memorable year, that of the Coronation of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, and the year in which the Association was celebrating its jubilee.

Delivering his presidential address, Alderman Williams said:

This last fifty years has seen a silent revolution, but none the less a revolution in the whole approach to Education in this country, and the book which Dr. Alexander has prepared, *The First Fifty Years*, shows this clearly and shows the part which we as an Association have played in that revolution. I would sum up the changes by saying that as the result of the developments since 1904 there is now a much greater confidence, a much greater understanding and a keener sense both of common purpose and of individual responsibility between the Ministry and the Local Education Authorities, between the members and officials of Local Authorities and the schools and the teachers, between the teachers and the children, and between those who are working in education on the one hand and parents and public on the other. The situation was very different in 1904, when, as we see from the records, this Association was pressing the Ministry to devolve more control to the Local Education Authorities. It was a situation in which the Local Authorities had to gain and maintain the initiative, and the story of our public discussions and our less public interviews with the officials at the centre and the successive Presidents of the Board of Education and Ministers of Education shows that we have indeed taken the initiative in many issues and on many occasions pressed for the implementation of the policies we have been advocating.

Our function as an Association is surely just that—to consider carefully what is desirable and necessary in the interests of the education service and the children, and then to press those policies with conviction, with reason, and with determination.

Personalities of the Past.

I believe there has grown in the half century a degree of mutual respect and confidence between the Ministry and this Association, as well as between the Ministry and the individual Local Education Authority which is without parallel in the world, and for that we have to thank not only our stalwart secretaries, and I am thinking particularly of Sir Percival Sharp and Dr. Alexander, but also those distinguished educationists who have served us as President of the Association over long years. I am glad that we still have with us Mr. Byng Kenrick, who was President in 1927, who is our only life Vice-President and who for more than a quarter of a century has played a major part in the affairs of this Association and in the affairs of the Burnham Committees.

Thinking back over the personalities of the last fifty years we remember the fighting strength and the generosity of mind of Sir Percival Sharp, who by his foresight and his north-country

doggedness did more for this Association than any other man. It must be a matter of real regret to all of us that he died so near to the Jubilee of this Association, when I am sure he would have had great joy in sharing in our celebrations at this Conference.

We remember, too, George Tomlinson, whose success as Minister of Education certainly owed something to his work with us as President and a member of our Executive Committee, and we remember, too, Thomas Walling, who watched our finances throughout the years preceding and during the last war and whose generous heart kept him always mindful of the needs of less fortunate children. He fought our battles well in the matter of grant formula and Exchequer aid.

We also remember, more distantly but perhaps no less affectionately, Mr. Spurley Hey and Dr. James Graham, who, with many other qualities, were certainly bonnie fighters. Of our Presidents, Sir George Lunn, Colonel Raley, Sir Percy Jackson, Sir James Aitken, Alderman Rowlinson, Sir John Catlow and Alderman Cropper spring to mind as men who spared nothing in furthering the interests of teachers and children through the Association of Education Committees, and whose wit and eloquence on the platform made our Annual Conferences memorable occasions.

The Same Problems Now.

These were great men, and I know I have your full confidence when I express our deep sense of gratitude to them; but we still have great men with us, and I am not one of those who look back with nostalgia to what are sometimes thought of as the greater and better days. Their problems are our problems, as a glance at the record of the last fifty years will show, and I am confident that we shall go forward with the same courage and skill as they have shown. After all, we have with us Sir Harold Jackson, Sir Samuel Gurney-Dixon, Alderman Wright Robinson and Alderman Redman, and we have in our officers, Dr. Alexander and Mr. Barraclough, two men who surely have the qualities and the power that those of previous years displayed.

I have said that the problems which faced our predecessors are the same as ours, and it is interesting that the first matter which was referred to in the first Annual Report of this Association is that of teachers' salaries. That topic is not unknown to us in this year of grace. We see, as we read the history of our half century, that the problems of the schemes of medical inspection and special educational treatment, of choice of employment, of the use of the film, of the regulations for the building of schools, of the relative responsibility of the Ministry and the Local Authority, of the equitable balance between Exchequer payment and rate contribution, of the training of teachers, recur again and again, and I have only selected a few of the problems that we have discussed and advised on and for which we have suggested and pressed for a solution.

Legislation, Finance and War.

The last fifty years has been a period of legislation covering the whole life of the people of this country and we have seen the Education Acts of 1918, 1921, 1936 and 1944 during this period. In each of them we have played our part in promulgating policy for years before the introduction of a Bill into Parliament and in properly pressing our views during the passage of those

Bills. Our advice has been increasingly sought in connection with education legislation and we have readily and gladly given of our experience and our resources to the Central Government and to the legislators in Parliament.

The last half century has also seen a series of financial crises and two major wars. When the state of national economy has demanded it we have done our best to assist towards a solution of the national problem in its financial implication while at the same time safeguarding what has been fought for and won. I believe that in this particular we have had no little success, not only in the 'twenties and 'thirties but also in very recent years. In the disastrous periods of war we, as an Association, and each of us as individual Local Authorities, have ensured that the children should suffer least of all, and I am proud to feel that as the result of the work of Local Authority members and teachers during the last war the children are now growing to maturity with little hurt and physically as good as, if not better than, their predecessors.

Changing Attitudes.

I stated earlier that I regarded the change in the last fifty years as being a change in attitude and a strengthening of confidence, and I have already mentioned that change as it affects the relationship between the Ministry of Education and the Local Education Authorities. There has also been a great change in the attitude of teachers to children. Our schools are now happier and healthier places, and though the classes are far too large our teachers are approaching, and in large measure succeeding in treating, the children as individuals, each with his own need, rather than looking upon a class as a massed meeting for instruction. In this whole approach the teachers have been encouraged by this Association and by the Local Authorities themselves, and there is no doubt of the very much happier relationships between teachers and children on the one hand and teachers and members and officials of the Local Authority on the other. The fruits of this are seen not only in the classroom

but outside school time, when so many of our men and women in the teaching service are giving of their skill and their interest and their ability in organizing sports and clubs, educational visits, camps and health-giving pursuits for their children.

Perhaps the most significant development is in the understanding and confidence between the parents and public on the one hand and the schools and the Local Education Authorities on the other, and this again is a development which is due to the initiative of all parties. The establishment of Parent-Teacher Associations where common problems are discussed at regular intervals and where the parent is enabled to see the view of the teacher and to appreciate the new techniques and approaches have done much to this end.

The establishment of Boards of Governors and Managers in primary and secondary schools has brought a large number of citizens of standing into direct contact with the teachers and the children and with all that is going on in the schools, and I am certain that this will serve us well in the years that are to come.

I have said nothing about our work in connection with further education or the policies which we have propagated with reference to the path to the university and to the higher forms of education, but this is clearly of first-class importance and this Association has pressed and continues to press for the proper recognition of the Local Authorities' colleges of technology and for the appreciation of the place of the Local Authority and its function in providing the means for the children of high intellectual calibre to proceed to the universities.

Importance of the Primary School.

It is not possible in an address of this nature to cover more than a part of the field of education, and I want to conclude with some reference to the developments of primary education during the last fifty years. The developments in the extension of the grammar schools since 1920 and in the secondary technical and commercial schools, as well as more recently in the secondary modern schools, have been spectacular. The changes in the nature of the provision of education for children under the age of eleven have been less spectacular but are of supreme importance.

As you will recall, fifty years ago there was of course no such thing as a "primary school" in the sense in which that expression is used to-day. The conception of a unified national system of education sub-divided into successive stages was an inspiration of the Hadow Committee, which became something fairly near to a reality after the Education Act of 1944. One can only compare the primary school of to-day with the infant classes and first four standards of the "elementary" school of 1903.

The difference between the public attitude to the elementary school of 1903 and to the primary school of to-day is significant. This is a matter of social as much as of educational history. The schools reflect the changed relationships within society, and in particular the greater social unity and the narrowing of the gaps between social classes brought about by many factors and hastened by the two world wars. People used to think of the elementary school of 1903 as something provided for the "poorer classes." But that expression "poorer classes" has not only entirely disappeared from the jargon of the professional educationist but is now hardly ever heard in the vocabulary of everyday life. The primary school is coming more and more to be thought of as the school for the neighbourhood to which it is just as natural for the doctor, the lawyer and the schoolmaster to send his son as for the artisan and the unskilled labourer: this change has contributed to the strength and soundness of English life.

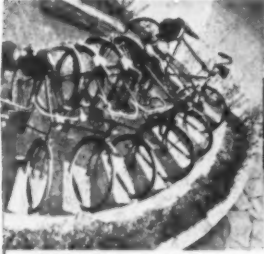
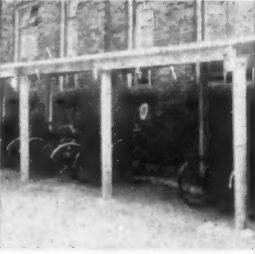
Improved School Building.

I am myself a builder and have always taken the greatest interest in the design and construction of school buildings. The contrast between some of the buildings in use at the turn of the century and primary schools built in accordance with the building regulations of to-day is striking. Nevertheless, I would like to put in a good word for many of the board schools. They must in their day have seemed "palaces," and the inclusion in so many of them of swimming baths showed a bold and imaginative policy, to which in these days of higher medical standards we have seldom been able to return.

Compactness was a good feature in their design, and to that we have had to return both for reasons of economy and to avoid making undue demands for land in densely populated towns, after dallying with single storey construction in the 1930s and 1940s. The galleries of the board school classrooms are now out of fashion, since they are inconsistent with the modern trend towards movement and activity in the classroom, but they

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recall to me the days when children were expected to be in school to do real hard bookwork.

In other respects I must agree that fifty years has seen much improvement. The modern primary school is to most late nineteenth century voluntary schools as is the modern corporation house to the nineteenth century slum house. The modern primary school is to the board school of 1903 as is the modern corporation flat to the corporation flat of 1903. We have come to think it essential to have a standard of artificial lighting which will enable children to read in dull weather without danger to their sight. We now think it essential to have independent access to each teaching space and will no longer tolerate the interruption to work which accompanies the progress of a class through the room of another class. We think that the Head and staff should have their own rooms, with reasonable amenities. We think that facilities should be there to encourage the children to wash, particularly where washing is not easy at home. It is curious that fine new schools were being built as late as the end of the 1930s without any supply of hot water, so that a good deal of money has still to be spent on domestic hot water installations.

The Qualified Teacher.

Even more important than the building of a school is its staff of teachers. In this sphere, too, there have been fundamental changes, not least, perhaps I may be allowed to say as a member of the Burnham Committee, in the remuneration of the profession both absolutely and relatively to other professions. The size of the class the teacher in a primary school is expected to teach has not fallen as much as I had hoped. In 1909 it was limited to sixty, and now, in spite of a regulation limit of forty, it is nearer fifty in most towns. Nor has it yet been possible to increase the period of teacher training to three years as was recommended by the McNair Report.

The most significant change is to be found in the proportion of qualified men and women in the profession. Most men of my generation can tell many stories of magnificent, rugged, individualist schoolmasters who taught them in their youth. Yet it has to be remembered that in 1903 less than half the teachers were certificated and the training colleges were not producing sufficient teachers to replace normal wastage. The aim of an all-certificated profession was not even seen as an ideal. The Ministry of Education deserve credit for their initiative in expanding the training college service since 1945.

Standards of Work.

Comparison of standards of work and of attainment between the primary schools of fifty years ago and of to-day has become perhaps the educational matter most frequently discussed to-day by the typical business man, and by the man in the street. The contrast in discipline is obvious. I am prepared to admit that the school of to-day is a much happier place than the school of fifty years ago, and that there is more respect for the child as a unique individual whose talent should be developed to the uttermost. I would admit, too, that in a good school the newer and more friendly relationship between teacher and child does not prevent the teacher from insisting on hard work from the pupil.

The curriculum has been broadened to include many activities other than the three "Rs," the driving force for gradual change coming both from within the profession itself and in response to promptings from the officers of the Central Government and of the Authorities. The all too common criticism of the schools for failing to produce universal literacy is, in my view, due to a misunderstanding and does not tie up in any way with the comparative reduction in the time given to the three "Rs" in a primary school of to-day compared with a school of fifty years ago.

In my view the proportion of literates is higher than ever before in our history, but public opinion has advanced so much that it expects the educational system to produce 100 per cent. literacy. At the same time illiteracy of an individual is brought to light much more than in the past as a result of National Service and the almost universal practice of reading newspapers. This practice is itself a consequence of the work of the elementary schools from 1870 onwards.

As I see it, the danger in the primary schools is not that they will neglect the three "Rs," but rather that they may fail to take the bright pupil just so far as he is capable of going. It is possible that some schools may be content to make sure that their bright pupils pass through the grammar school entrance examination, when these pupils are capable of advancing much

further. I am not suggesting that the able primary school child should make a start on French and Latin, as would his fellow at a private preparatory school, but I am suggesting that his curriculum should make just as much demand on him, if in different subject matter, as would be made in a really good private preparatory school.

To sum up, I am proud of what Britain has done to improve her primary schools over the last fifty years. It is fine story. Nevertheless, complacency would not be justified, and we must press on with our schemes for giving the best opportunity to all children.

I conclude by reiterating our gratitude to those who have served this Association so well over the last fifty years, and I am certain that with the very strong position we now hold we can confidently go forward.

Quarter of Budget on Education

Budapest will spend one quarter of its Budget on education, it was announced at a special meeting of the City Council last month.

Of the total estimated expenditure for 1953 of £34,841,500, the City will spend £9,000,000 on educational purposes.

And a further £3,000,000 will go on investment projects, such as school building, but the major part of this category of expenditure is borne by the State.

To cater for an increasing school population four new schools, including one secondary school, will be built this year. The largest has sixteen classrooms. Expenditure on extending the schools network this year is two-and-a-half times as great as last.

Of the 95,000 Budapest children of kindergarten age, 23,000 go to kindergartens. Last year six new kindergartens were built; this year there will be one new one costing £30,000.

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Miss Horsbrugh Surveys the Educational Field of To-day

Speaking at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Education Committees, Miss Florence Horsbrugh, the Minister of Education, said they were celebrating this year two anniversaries—the founding of the Association of Education Committees and the coming into operation of the Education Act of 1902. That Act established the dual system, and so laid the foundations on which Mr. Butler erected his great structure of 1944. They had had to make a number of minor alterations in that structure, and Parliament now has before it a Bill which will make some more changes of a minor character. In its essentials, however, the structure remained unimpaired. The other achievement of the 1902 Act was the establishment of a system of higher education. The Act empowered local authorities to supply, or aid the supply of, higher education; and that was the subject on which she wished to concentrate.

PRIMARY SCHOOL PROBLEMS.

Before doing so, however, Miss Horsbrugh referred briefly to some primary school problems, and first of all, to that of the quality of the education provided in these schools. There had been a good deal of loose talk lately about illiteracy beginning in the primary school, talk which there was no need for her to correct. There was also a good deal of well informed concern about methods, standards and aims. This concern she welcomed and she appreciated the efforts that had been made in several quarters to investigate various aspects of the problem of teaching the basic skills at the primary stage of education. Miss Horsbrugh said she was glad to give all the encouragement possible to efforts of this kind when these were undertaken by teachers or local authorities or by research bodies which they help or sponsor, and any enquiry of this kind should not lose sight of the important fact that, whatever general conclusions may be reached, they were in the last resort concerned with infinitely varying individual children.

At the present time they had also rather special problems arising from the rapid growth in the number of primary school children. It was estimated that this number increased last year by over 275,000, after considerable increases in earlier years. The increase is still continuing, though not at such a rapid rate, and they had to deal at the same time with all the complications resulting from the large scale movement to new housing areas.

On school buildings, the Minister said how glad she was that the Select Committee found the procedure for planning and building new schools to be efficient and satisfactory. The credit for that should be shared between the Ministry and the local authorities who are directly responsible for getting schools built.

The number of teachers employed in primary and secondary schools increased last year by 5,000. Although exact statistics were not yet available, Miss Horsbrugh believes this improvement meant that they had been maintaining, or very nearly maintaining, the staffing standards of 1950, in spite of the big increase in the number of children. They were planning to maintain a similar rate of increase for the next few years; and although places in the women's training colleges are not yet all full, 300 more have already been filled than was the case at this time a year ago.

Now that they were having to think more and more of the time when the chief pressure will be on the secondary schools, the National Advisory Council on the Training and Supply of Teachers is paying attention to the needs of the schools for specialist teachers of various kinds, teachers of housecraft, graduates and so on and they are investigating the position in relation to graduate teachers of mathematics and science.

SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Turning to secondary education Miss Horsbrugh said the post-war bulge will soon begin to pass into the secondary schools. In maintained and assisted secondary schools there are about 2 million children. Next year, and in succeeding years, the number will be more, till it passes 2,700,000 in 1961. L.E.A.s have already started to think about the problems which this increase in numbers entails. Some of the schools which it necessitates are already beginning to appear in building programmes; and, with the help of the National Advisory Council

they were considering what changes are necessary in the present pattern of teacher training. The coming of the bulge is confronting authorities with big decisions and it was important that these decisions be taken deliberately and in the light of all available facts.

The Act of 1944 set the objective of providing secondary education for all. This was a great challenge, which they could not be content to answer either by providing a standard educational machine through which all children are to be passed, or by fixing a standard amount of knowledge which all children are to absorb. Both these are methods which have been adopted in other countries. Our aim is to provide for each child a secondary education suited to his ability and aptitude: in other words, an education which gives him the chance of developing his talents to the utmost and making the best of himself as a person. No one would pretend that we are hopeful of achieving this ideal soon, or certain of getting very near it ever. The 1944 Act came into force only eight years ago. They could, however, take stock and see how much progress had been made, and whether they were going in the right direction.

In 1945, to almost everyone, secondary education meant grammar school education. They knew that it was splendidly successful for the most intelligent children, and that to many of the less successful it offered a continuity of ideas and community of sentiment which were satisfying and invaluable. They also knew that many of the children in these schools did not do well enough in their studies to make it clear that studies of that kind were right for them. But because in the country as a whole, only about 15 per cent. of the children of secondary school age were getting grammar school education, and a good many of these were not conspicuously suited by it, it did not necessarily follow when the time came to provide a secondary education for everybody, that the right solution was to provide grammar schools for all. Methods had to be found of educating many of the senior pupils by means which were more likely to get the best out of them than the academic approach could promise. This did not necessarily mean putting such children into separate buildings: it meant giving them as good staff and buildings, and finding ways of teaching more effective for them.

What alternative ways were available? On the one hand, there were the senior schools, which were already beginning to realize the possibilities that had been painted for them in the Hadow Report. On the other were the junior technical schools, for which the Spens Report prophesied a no less promising future. Once these two kinds of school could be promoted to a true partnership with the grammar school, the way seemed clear to the development of a three-pronged system of secondary education. Perhaps they all—authorities and Ministry alike—assumed too easily that, if a Development Plan provided for schools of the three types in reasonable proportions, the problem of secondary school education for all would be satisfactorily solved.

Selection.

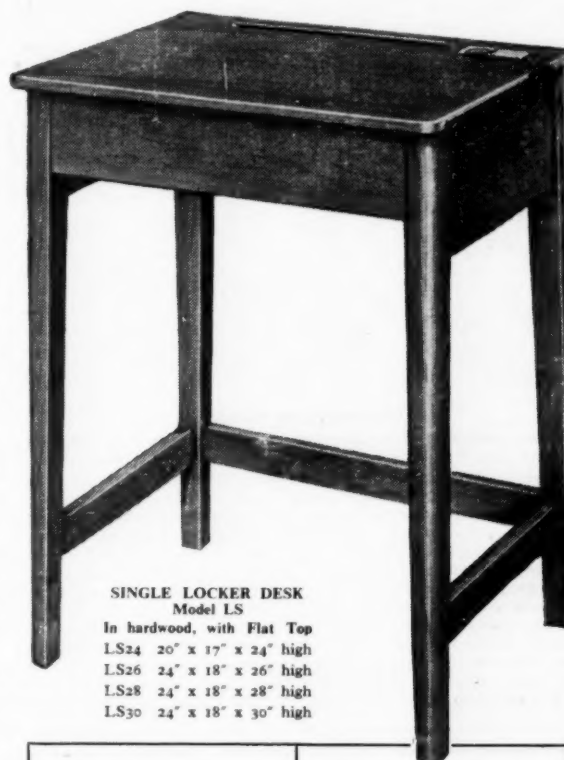
Miss Horsbrugh said she still thought it was the right point of departure, provided that the difficulties and "unpredictabilities" were not ignored. One of these was—and is—that in the eyes of many parents the selection procedure at 11+ decides the fate of a child once and for all. To such a parent the grammar school is the one form of secondary education. He knows its reputation. He knows that, before the 1944 Act, such education could be paid for. To some extent it still can, in independent and direct grant grammar schools. So, he thinks, it must be worth having. He sees it as the sole channel to the University, and the main channel to white-collar jobs. He thinks that if his child "fails" in the 11+ exam, as he calls it, he will go into a thing called a secondary modern school, which is to him a senior elementary school with a new name.

Let us face it said the Minister. In some parts of the country to-day this picture may be true. The 11+ exam. is an ordeal immensely stiffened by the anxieties of parents. Many authorities do too little to allay these anxieties or to dispel the widespread ignorance of many parents about the educational system as it is being developed. It seems that more could be done to explain to parents how secondary education in their neighbourhood is

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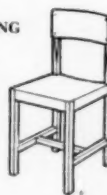
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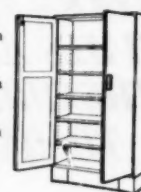
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organized and what courses the different secondary schools offer. She believed that parents often know much less about these schools than some people suppose. They think of their own school days, but things have changed since then, whatever age the parents may be. Could not more visits to secondary schools be arranged for parents of children in primary schools? And what about the teachers in primary schools, who so often are the people who have to advise the anxious parents? Have they been given a recent chance to visit the secondary schools which their primary schools feed? More could be done, too, to explain to parents the methods which are used for selection; and the announcement of results could be much more tactfully handled than it often is.

It was, however, no use trying to pretend that for all children, and their parents, all is now well. We could not jump in less than ten years from a state of affairs in which over 80 per cent. of children over eleven were restricted to elementary education, to a condition in which 100 per cent. can be sure of the right education for each. Nor can imperfections be compensated by clever public relations. Because parents are not kept well enough informed, many of them to-day under-rate the value and possibilities of the secondary education which is already being offered.

Comprehensive Schools.

Now something about the various kinds of secondary school, dealing first with the Comprehensive panacea. It looks easy: put all the children in the same school, and there will be no problems of selection and no sense of inferiority or superiority. The difficulty is, what to do with the children when you get them there—if you can get them there. Recent publications of the L.C.C. show that even the "Comprehenders" don't find this easy when they get down to it. Let us, said Miss Horsbrugh, get this question in perspective. Less than 1 per cent. of senior children are at present in comprehensive schools. Out of 146 L.E.A.s only twenty-three have proposed any comprehensive schools in their Development Plans, and of these not more than half a dozen have proposed a complete system of such schools for their areas. So, from the practical point of view, this solution is not going to sweep the country. She was not against limited

experiments with this type of school. They may be valuable, but it is important that people should get down to and work out the practical educational problems which arise. It is not enough merely to talk in terms of types or kinds of schools.

Everyone who does not support the Comprehensive idea must, however, agree that some allocation between schools has to be made when children come to the end of the primary stage. It might be a good thing if this selection could be made at an age later than 11+, but that is not a practical proposition so long as the bulk of children still leave school just after their fifteenth birthday. There is no real evidence of public distrust of the way in which this allocation is made. Most people realize that authorities have tried very conscientiously to work out the best methods, and that in most areas the usual combination of tests, teachers' reports and interviews is about as fair as any method can be. This selection, however, must not be, or even seem to be, an unalterable decision which settles the fate of a child for all time. No selection affecting so many people so deeply can be faultless.

There ought to be ample opportunities of rectifying mistakes—not just at 13+ or, say, at 15+, but as soon as a serious error is noticed, or whenever a head master or head mistress sees that a child could do better in a different school.

Two points are plainly important here. The first is, that the possibility of transfer after 11+ should not be allowed to dominate the curriculum by imposing a common course on all children for, say, their first two years in a secondary school; this would risk turning the school into a diagnostic centre. The second point is, that arrangements for transfer from one secondary school to another should be made without the formality of an examination. This cannot always be done, but an examination at this stage seems liable to cramp the freedom of the schools. If the allocation at 11+ can be increasingly recognized as the best effort to distribute children that can be achieved at that time, and if it is generally appreciated that, as more evidence comes to light later on a change will be made, there is a better prospect of making the tests involved less of an ordeal. There is also a prospect that they will have a less damaging effect than they sometimes do now on the work of the primary schools.

Secondary Schools.

Next, we want fewer preconceived ideas about the kind of education which should be given in particular "types" of school. This, said the Minister, is specially important, if only because the selection at 11+ is bound to be to some extent not merely a theoretical selection according to ability, but a competition for a limited number of places in particular schools. Because John just passes on 11+ exam. and Jim just "fails," it is surely wrong to treat them quite differently. One does not suddenly become superior to the other. Perhaps he always was. Isn't it sensible to suppose that the kind of education that will suit the aptitude and ability of the one will be very like that which will suit the other? In practice the education which the two of them get is not always by any means similar—and quite often not particularly suitable to either. John, who just passed the examination, gets a course which was really devised for boys a good deal cleverer and more bookish than he is; and Jim, who just failed, gets a course which does not seem to him or his parents to hold out bright enough prospects for him, so he does not go "all out," and he fails to make the best of himself. John and Jim do not represent just a few borderline cases: they may account for as many as 25 per cent. of their age group, so theirs is a problem which deserves careful attention. The solutions lie mainly in the hands of the teachers in the schools. Some progress is being made. There are grammar schools whose heads have recognized the need for a curriculum for the slower movers, simpler and less theoretical than that which is taken by the "flyers." There are modern schools where, particularly in the later years, the most talented boys and girls get courses which encourage them to stay on for one and even two years beyond the compulsory school age. In some areas (such as Portsmouth, Bournemouth, Southampton and parts of Durham and Surrey) these pupils successfully take papers in the G.C.E.; a few of them at advanced level. Miss Horsbrugh said she did not suggest that the G.C.E. was necessarily a suitable objective for modern schools generally; there are many pros and cons on that subject. What she did suggest was that no arbitrary limits should be set to the educational achievement of a boy or girl simply because, as a result of the 11+ exam., he or she goes to one school rather than another. The duty of the staff of a school was not to say "We give one kind of education: the school down the road gives another," but rather to say: "It is

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our job to study the children who have been given to us and, as a result of that study, to plan and continually to adapt, an education which will help to get them as far as they can go."

So much depends on the atmosphere of the school and that, in turn, depends on the individual quality and team work of the staff. So often a particular school is good because it has an outstanding head master or head mistress. Their influence is often particularly noticeable in the community life of the school. They know that boys and girls who stay at school beyond their fifteenth birthday will be comparing the treatment they receive with the atmosphere in which their friends already at work are living. They appreciate the interest which can be aroused by subjects such as music and art, housecraft and handicraft, which are not always taken with an examination in view. The many controversies about secondary education have tended to obscure the fact that all good secondary schools have much in common, and as the years go by and the newer kinds of secondary school gradually establish themselves, these common features will increase.

Grammar Schools.

What developments should be expected from each of the different kinds of secondary school? First, the grammar schools. In some grammar schools a sort of inferiority complex has developed since the war, a feeling that their value is not being recognized, that the general tendency is towards a levelling down, away from the high standards which they rightly thought they ought to set. It is unfortunate that this fear was ever allowed to arise. We ought never to under-rate the value and justice to all our children of providing properly for the ablest. At the school level, the grammar schools are the guardians of the high academic standards which the Universities largely exist to preserve. Nothing should be done to discourage the staffs of these schools from a sense of pride in their past achievements and a determination to lead the way intellectually in future. Now that all the initial controversies over the introduction of the G.C.E. in place of the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate are over, Miss Horsbrugh expressed the hope that the grammar schools would settle down to making the most of their opportunities under the new examination arrangements. They must be modest too: they must remember that before the war about a quarter of their pupils never passed the school certificate; that, for various reasons, by no means all now get a G.C.E.; and that the kind of course and kind of teaching which suits the future State scholars is not necessarily, by itself, best for all the pupils in the school.

Technical Schools.

Next, the secondary technical school. It used to be assumed, perhaps too readily, that schools of this kind should be spread through the length and breadth of the land without regard to local traditions and needs. Now, we think of them usually as schools which have a special part to play where there is a strong local industrial or commercial interest as a background. Until now these schools have been handicapped, perhaps more than most, by inadequate buildings. They often have to share buildings with technical colleges. That picture is now slowly beginning to change. Five new secondary technical schools in completely up-to-date buildings should be opened this autumn, and there are a good many more under construction. As one example of the educational progress which has been made. A secondary technical school in the North of England was started in 1944, with a five-year course which was specifically advertised as not leading to the School Certificate. Now arrangements are in hand for about one-third of the entry to embark on genuine Sixth Form work, including the taking of five or more subjects in the G.C.E. The school keeps 85 per cent. of its pupils to the age of 16+—that is better than many grammar schools—and most of them go on to good jobs which are related to the course that they have been following at school.

Modern Schools.

The secondary modern school represents one of the few attempts anywhere in the world to provide an education suitable for the bulk of secondary school pupils. If it succeeds it may yet prove to be this country's most characteristic contribution to education in the second half of this century. The secondary modern school is as difficult to describe as a happy home or a happy ship; it is not less recognisable.

These schools are difficult to describe because they fall into no fixed pattern. This in turn is due to the fact that they express the personality and ideas of the head and of his or her staff, they reflect the differing interests and abilities of their pupils, and they respond to the needs and characters of the communities they

serve. But when full allowance has been made for these valuable diversities, they can be seen to have some important characteristics in common. They recognize, for example, that one of their most important tasks is to give to their pupils a thorough mastery of the skills that life in this complex civilization of ours demands, the skills that make for literacy, certainly—but also those manual and domestic skills that underlie so much of the world's work. Secondly, they are aware that, while their children cannot learn everything, the more they learn the more interesting and intelligible the world will become for them. Next, these schools are realistic enough to see that they cannot satisfy the legitimate expectations of either pupils or parents unless the courses they give are visibly related to the occupations that ultimately await their pupils—it may be retail trade or catering, work on the land, an engineering apprenticeship, or entry to one of the many professions that look for a preliminary qualification. This means that they are not afraid or ashamed of having their courses dubbed "vocational" by those who give to that word too narrow a connotation. They know that there are many children who can be helped to practise intellectual honesty even if they cannot define it—through art or music or literature or craftsmanship. They keep a balance between their many functions: they do not for example, do justice to the clever child by neglecting the stupid one, nor coddle the dull by ignoring the bright. On top of all this they do not pin their faith to a particular method or approach, whether it is labelled "traditional," "activity," "project" or anything else, but continually develop for themselves a variety of methods to suit the particular children, the particular courses and—not least—the particular teachers concerned. A challenging list of qualities! Yes—but such schools *have* been brought into being when head and staff have clear objectives. There the children have a marked sense of achievement (even when it is at a humble level), out-of-school activities abound and flourish, and the whole school buzzes with hard work and a vigorous community life. Our aim must be to enlarge the number of such schools.

Administrative Problems.

Coming now to problems more specifically administrative. The first important—indeed vital—step on the way to secondary education for all, said the Minister, was taken when the compulsory age was raised to fifteen. This enabled all secondary schools to offer at least a four-year course, and some of the advantages of this great reform are now beginning to be reaped. It is perhaps fortunate that there will have been an interval of some ten years for the secondary schools to accustom themselves to the new circumstances before the post-war birthrate begins to affect them to a marked extent.

All-Age Schools.

A word about the all-age school. In many areas, particularly perhaps in country places, there are all-age schools which because they have good and understanding teachers, are doing a splendid job. But they cannot offer the opportunities which exist in a secondary school, and they are doomed to disappear. Many people imagine that because we have all been so pre-occupied since the war with the effect of the rising birthrate on the primary schools, the number of all-age schools remains much what it was when the 1944 Act came into force. That is not so. The number has been reduced from 9,572 in 1946 to 5,107 in 1952; or, to put it another way, the percentage of senior children in re-organized schools has increased from 76 per cent. in 1945 to 85 per cent. in 1952.

The post-war birthrate will raise difficult questions of distribution of the children between different schools. In January, 1952, 20 per cent. of all grant-aided pupils aged thirteen were in grammar schools or grammar streams. This figure conceals wide variations from well over 50 per cent. to below 10 per cent. The number of children of thirteen in secondary technical schools on the same date was rather under 4 per cent. This figure too conceals variations. Ought we to say that particular grammar and technical school percentages, say the present national averages, are right and the rest wrong? What decisions ought L.E.A.s to take about building and staffing new schools to take the extra children?

Miss Horsbrugh thought it would be quite wrong to be dogmatic about the proportion of grammar or technical places. Variations in the proportion of grammar or technical places in different areas may give rise to complaints of inequality of opportunity, and the right proportion has not been achieved in every area. But circumstances do vary greatly and for that reason it may well be defensible to have different percentages in

different parts of an authority's area. When a new secondary school is needed, one of the things to do is to look at the borderline pupils in the existing schools and see how they are getting on. If, for instance, in an area where the secondary schools are limited to grammar and modern, the weakest children in the existing grammar schools are not doing very well, and if—this seems a point particularly worth studying—they are not staying on at school very long, that might suggest that the profitable limit of grammar school places has been reached, at least for the time being, in that area. Similarly, if it seems that the ablest children in the local modern schools are not being sufficiently challenged by the education which they are receiving, either arrangements ought to be made for more ambitious courses in those modern schools, or more grammar school places ought to be provided.

Another important consideration is for authorities to have definite ideas about the purposes which their secondary schools exist to serve. Very often the proportions going to different types of school have been settled by historical accident. The coming of the extra children offers an opportunity—indeed a duty—to consider the educational purposes of each authority's secondary school policy.

It might be argued that the main purpose of the grammar schools is to educate the relatively small proportion of boys and girls who are likely to be capable ultimately of profiting by a university course or its equivalent and that they should, therefore, be restricted to a small percentage of the secondary age group—those who would be certain to stay on for the full six or seven years of the course—leaving the bulk of the increase to be absorbed in new or extended modern schools. Such a course would not be practical politics—and, however much we as educationists may deplore early leaving, who is to say that the pupils in question have not derived some positive benefit from their course? As practical men and women, we have got to accept the fact that for many years to come the grammar schools must expect to have in them a number of pupils who will not complete the full course.

This has certain implications for the local modern schools. If only, say, 10 per cent. of the children go to grammar schools, it must be expected that a good many of the other schools in the area will need to provide courses beyond the compulsory school age and may on that account have a better chance of doing so. This would have to be borne in mind when plans for new buildings were prepared.

Some authorities may take a different view of the purpose of their grammar schools. For a variety of reasons—including possibly local sentiment and tradition—they might adopt a policy of putting a high proportion of senior pupils into grammar schools. The effect of such a policy on the local modern schools would have to be carefully considered. Of course, by talking only of grammar and modern schools, Miss Horsbrugh said she had over-simplified the problem: often the technical school will come into the picture too, and in some areas a bilateral grammar-technical may be the best answer.

For all these reasons, she was not prepared to say that a particular percentage is best or that there is a range which is defensible and that everything which comes outside that range is wrong. The important points are that each authority should have a considered policy, that this policy should be conceived less in terms of the types of schools to which the pupils are to be allocated than of the courses which are suited to their ages, abilities and aptitudes, and that all possible support should be given to the teachers, who are the essence of the schools.

Concluding, the Minister said there was no definite goal which we could reach and be satisfied with. As with other human problems, we need here both continuous effort, from which good results will be achieved, and a consciousness that each achievement imposes a new task.

Nine sons of labourers on Dunlop's rubber plantations in Malaya are to receive Coronation scholarships worth from £800 to £960 for 10-12 years' primary and secondary education at three schools in Negri Sembilan and Johore.

A proposal that women who fail by a small margin in not more than one of the five required Leaving Certificate subjects, but who in the opinion of the National Committee for the Training of Teachers are otherwise suitable, should be admitted for training as non-graduate teachers, is made in a draft amendment to the Training of Teachers Regulations published by the Secretary of State for Scotland.

Adult Education Service

Committee of Enquiry Set Up.

Following the Minister of Education's statement in the House of Commons in April that she proposed to set up a small committee to review the administrative and financial aspects of the Adult Education Service, Miss Horsbrugh last month announced that the following have agreed to serve on that Committee:

Dr. Eric Ashby, Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University, Belfast (Chairman).

Mr. A. L. C. Bullock, M.A., Censor of St. Catherine's Society, Oxford.

Professor W. L. Burn, Professor of Modern History, University of Durham.

Mr. T. Mervyn Jones, M.A., LL.M., Chairman, Wales Gas Board, and a former Town Clerk of Newport.

Sir Wilfrid Martineau, M.C., T.D., M.A., a former Chairman of the Birmingham Education Committee.

Mr. C. M. Skinner, C.B.E., F.C.A., LL.D., a member of the Court of Governors of Manchester University.

Mr. G. B. Thorneycroft, member of the General Council Trades Union Congress.

The Committee will have the following terms of reference:

To review the present system by which the extra-mural departments of universities, the Workers' Educational Association and the other responsible bodies provide local facilities for adult education, with special reference to the conditions under which these facilities are organized and are aided by grant from public funds: and to make recommendations.

Optical Projection Equipment in Schools

The Council for Codes of Practice for Buildings has issued in final form Code 412, "Installation of Optical Projection Equipment in Educational Establishments." It was drawn up by a Committee convened on behalf of the Council by the Illuminating Engineering Society, and the present Code is a revision, following comments received, of the draft Code previously issued.

This Code deals with the provision and installation of optical projection equipment in schools and other educational establishments, and advises on the choice and location of such equipment. The Code is not applicable where inflammable film is used.

Various types of projection apparatus are described, recommendations being made as to the suitability of each type, and the arrangements required, for use in school halls, lecture theatres and classrooms. The equipment described includes standard lanterns, episcopes, epidiascopes, miniature projectors, projection microscopes, manuscript projectors and combined apparatus.

The quality of reproduction of images on various types of screen (both reflecting and translucent) is assessed. Recommendations deal with positioning, size, protection against dirt, screen brightness and the placing of loud-speakers.

There are also design notes on general lighting and control of daylight, acoustics, and ancillary matters.

Copies may be obtained from the British Standards Institution, 24-28, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1, price 7s. 6d., post free, reference CP 412 (1953).

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The
SCHOOL GOVERNMENT CHRONICLE
and
EDUCATION REVIEW

No. 3336

JULY, 1953

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CONTENTS

A.E.C. FIFTY YEARS JUBILEE	Page 5
QUARTER OF BUDGET ON EDUCATION	7
MISS HORSBRUGH SURVEYS THE EDUCATIONAL FIELD OF TO-DAY	8
ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE	12
OPTICAL PROJECTION EQUIPMENT IN SCHOOLS	12
MONTH BY MONTH	14
EDUCATION IN 1952	17
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN	18
MORE KNOWLEDGE OF PLASTICS	19
TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND	19
THE SELECT COMMITTEE REPORTS	20
TEN YEARS' GROWTH	22
FILM STRIPS	24
BOOK NOTES	26
BROADCASTS TO SCHOOLS, 1953-54	28

Month by Month

Select Committee on Estimates.

It is almost unnecessary to add to the volume of press comment that greeted the publication of the Report of the Select Committee on Estimates. To the Local Education Authorities, their officers and the teachers in their maintained schools the Committee simply told and made public what they themselves knew full well to be the truth about school buildings. The inadequacy of the schools' building programme can no longer be denied nor is it for educationists to say what other expenditure must be reduced to find the money needed for the serious arrears in school building. The Local Education Authorities severally and through their associations have given figures of school places required which the Minister has not accepted, but which the Committee in effect now assert were correct. To that extent the Minister may be quite fairly and justly criticised. She should not, however, be held responsible for the failures whether of error or neglect, of her predecessors. The Report should also focus public attention to the fact that, unlike her predecessors, Miss Horsbrugh is not a Cabinet Minister, as she should be. It has been her unhappy lot to have to practice, impose and require restrictions in educational expenditure which the educational service could not properly meet. She inherited too an Education Act which, as the *Times Educational Supplement* put it, "promised the children a new Jerusalem, and with it material plans drawn up to guarantee them nothing more than a sight of the blackboard."

Black-Listed Schools.

THE Minister should have no difficulty in replying to any purely party political criticism. However slow the progress may be, the present government has done more school building than its predecessor and notably more house building. No one will deny that homes must come before even schools. It has been pointed out too that the shortage of schools and continued use of many seriously sub-standard buildings result from the six years war-time suspension of building. All this is aggravated too by the "bulge" in the births of immediate post-war years which is now passing through the schools like a tidal wave or bore. This, as the *Sunday Times* points out, was equivalent in the housing analogy to a sudden addition of some five millions to the population. It should be remembered however that many school buildings still of necessity in use to-day were condemned as unfit a generation ago. There was no reason why those schools, many of which were council schools, should not have been replaced before the last war. Not only successive governments, but many local education authorities, failed to do anything at all to improve matters when it was in their power to do something. The result is the most complete denial of equality of opportunity to thousands of children who have, in fact, received no noticeable benefits under the Education Act, 1944, which they would not in any case have received under the Education Act, 1921. It is literally true that, as the *Sunday Times* said, "while some lucky pupils were taught in luxury, others languished in dark, cold and insanitary old schools."

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The fantastic Building Regulations of 1945 have also impeded the replacement of these old buildings. The Select Committee think that "there is still room for improvement in the design of buildings" and this is to put it mildly. Buildings erected in the first flush of the new standards are often well-nigh impossible to supervise, difficult to heat, costly to maintain and unsightly to behold. All this is not inconsistent with the highest degree of luxury within. The newer schools do not sprawl so riotously upon unlimited sights and make more practical teaching units. It may be that, as has been suggested here before, a fundamental error was made in 1944. The *Sunday Times* may be wrong in its claim that the quality of education has been depressed *pari passu* with the increase of its quantity. There is, however, some truth in its claim that "if good education had been put before longer education, the school building problem would have been far more manageable to-day and classes far less overcrowded."

Challenge to Britain.

THE "programme of action for the next Labour Government" has rightly received much attention from the national press. Its proposals are not more revolutionary than might be expected. It is, nevertheless, worth recording, since the fact is nowhere explicitly stated, that it could not be carried out without some fundamental amendment of the Education Acts, 1944-1948, which have always been regarded as agreed non-party measures. The Labour Party would abolish grammar schools and consequently the eleven-plus examination. The programme does not even envisage any internal selection within the proposed junior secondary schools themselves. Thus two great principles of the Butler Act are either ignored or repudiated—education appropriate to the three A's, and the "parents' charter." Some kind of selection examination at 15+ seems to be implicit in the proposal, to which might be applied all the objections raised against the 11+ selection. This later selection seems also to make nonsense of the present statutory provision for the ultimate raising of the school leaving age to sixteen. So far as independent schools, both public and private, are concerned, the programme is moderate in its beginning. The party would "concentrate in the first instance not on abolishing fee-paying schools but on improving the standard of our free education." This, however, would be but a step towards the complete nationalisation of education on a totalitarian pattern. Freedom, in the sense of independence, must be forbidden in the educational world. There is no suggestion, there could be none, that independent schools certified as efficient are not efficient. Their crime is that they are independent. Implicit in the proposals is the violation of trust deeds, the confiscation of endowments and the secularisation of religious foundations. There are obvious dangers too in giving any government the sole right to fill places at universities. It is strange to read the statement that the present arrangements under which local education authorities provide scholarships to public schools should cease. The arrangements have already received their death blow in the Education Bill now awaiting royal approval. The Ministry have also done what they can to render such integration of the independent and maintained school systems impossible.

Last month it was reported that, on representations from the Minister, Bournemouth Local Education Authority had discontinued its practice followed since 1945 of allowing Roman Catholic parents a choice for their children between a "county" grammar school and a local independent Roman Catholic school. There is no maintained Roman Catholic grammar school in Bournemouth. The Authority's decision is the result of a definite request from the Minister. Not only is the offer of free places at these schools to be discontinued, but parents are to be denied assistance under the Education Act, 1944, Section 81. This action alone vindicates the statements previously made here regarding the Education Bill, 1953. Clearly, local education authorities are being deprived of rights previously exercised without question under the Education Act, 1944, and even under the Education Act, 1921, but parents are being deprived of the right of choice of school on religious grounds which is supposedly assured to them under the Act.

In the parliamentary debate on the Education (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, Viscount Caldecote sought to defend the public schools against what seemed to him to be "ill-informed criticisms." The relevance of his remarks to the Bill under consideration was not manifest. He had no difficulty in showing that those schools were ready and willing to take up to 25 per cent. of their pupils from maintained schools. The fact that very few of these places are so filled is obviously something for which the Ministry is largely responsible. It is however possible to believe firmly and sincerely in the preservation of independent or "free" schools as such,

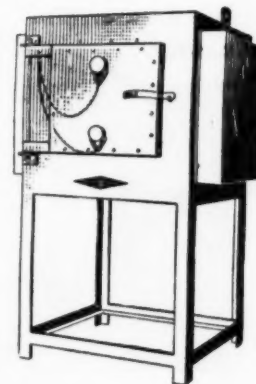
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alongside the direct-grant and maintained schools, and yet not to favour anything like the Fleming Committee's proposals. Lord Caldecote was replying to criticisms that the Public Schools had "failed to carry out the obligations put upon them in the Fleming Report." The Report, however, put no obligations upon those schools. It merely made suggestions. It was a report and nothing more, and has shared the fate of many earlier and perhaps even better reports on many other subjects.

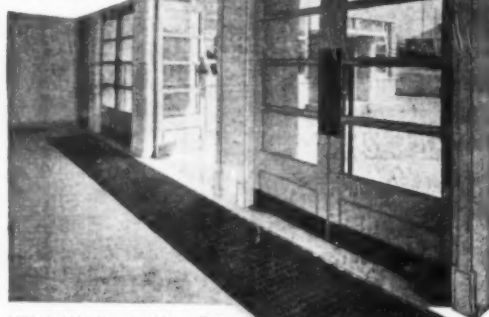
The School Dental Service.

CORRESPONDENCE between the Ministry of Health and the British Dental Association regarding the dental treatment of school children from 30th March to 28th May was published last month. In some respects it makes strange reading. Having regard to the shortage of dentists employed full-time in the School Health Service, the Association suggested that dentists in general practice might be engaged on a sessional basis for part-time service in school clinics. The Association's representatives met officers of the Ministry in March and in a subsequent letter confirmed that there had been "virtually complete agreement" on this and other points, including the suggestion that "everything possible should be done to encourage further practitioners to undertake this work (i.e., as proposed above) in those areas in which their services can be utilised." Even with this help there would for some time be in some areas an excess of children unable to get treatment through the School Dental Service.

The British Dental Association proposed that these children should be treated under the National Health Act, 1946, Part IV. They regarded it as "highly desirable" that the parents should be encouraged to take such children to a practitioner in the General Dental Service. The Ministers of Health and Education were, however, adamant in their view that these particular proposals would have an adverse effect on recruitment for the School Dental Service and could not fail to hinder the development of a service for children on lines agreed between the Minister and the Association. The Ministers therefore refused to accept the above proposals and would do no more than point out that Executive Councils administering locally the general dental service are always available to help parents who have difficulty in finding dentists for their children. The Dental Association felt that this suggestion was of little practical value to parents who might not know where to find the surgeries of the dentists willing to treat such children, still less where to find the local Executive Council. The address of the Council might in any case be very remote from the parent's home. The Association suggested a dental publicity campaign to stress the need for having a child's teeth examined thrice yearly and the fact that "if this cannot be done under the local School Dental Service the parents should make use of the facilities available under the General Dental Services." The Association's second letter concluded with an expression of bewilderment that their spontaneous offer of 1,000,000 extra half-hour appointments per year for the treatment of children should thus be rejected "by the Ministers who are apparently only concerned with long term policies which will take many years to implement." On the one hand all who have been concerned with the work of the School Dental Service will appreciate the desire of the Ministers to maintain and to strengthen that service. It is significant that both Ministers speak as one on the matter. On the other hand a policy, however admirable, which will take years to implement is little comfort to the child who has toothache to-day.

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Speaking at the fourth centenary dinner of Christ's Hospital recently, Mr. R. A. Butler, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said that Christ's Hospital stood for that rare and precious thing, quality in education. Fifty years ago it cost £56 a year to maintain a child at the school. By 1939 the figure had risen to £116 and last year it was £223. At present there was a gap between expenditure and receipts of more than £18,000.

Education in 1952

The Annual Report of the Ministry of Education for 1952 (Cmd. 8835 H.M.S.O., 5s. 0d.) states that the Ministry's main tasks during the year were first to provide for the rapidly increasing numbers of children coming into the schools and secondly to provide for the maintenance and development of technical and high technological education.

• School Population.

The expanding school population was the dominant factor affecting the policy of the Department for educational building and for the training of teachers. There are now more children in the schools than ever before. During 1952 the school population increased by 250,000 to a total of about 6,250,000, "and," the Report says, "it will go on increasing by smaller numbers but at a substantial rate until about 1960." The volume of educational building and the number of teachers being trained are designed to cope with this increase.

School Building.

A total of 675 new schools were actually occupied during 1952; 489 of these were schools completed during the year and the remaining 186 were schools under construction where the work was sufficiently advanced to enable them to be brought into use. At the end of 1952, a total of 1,011 new schools were under construction, including the 186 just mentioned. The Minister anticipates that the number of additional places to be provided during 1953 will be sufficient to achieve the total of 1,150,000 new places which her predecessor estimated to be needed between the beginning of 1947 and the end of 1953.

The Report states that the output of new school places would have been smaller but for the measures taken at the beginning of 1952 to reduce the overloading of the building industry and to relate the rate of starting new projects to the availability of steel. Although few new projects could be started during the early months of 1952, more work was actually carried out during that time than in the corresponding period of any previous post-war year. By the end of the year the rate at which new work was being started had regained the level of previous years.

Though building costs rose by about 6 per cent. during the year, the maximum net costs per place of £140 and £240 for primary and secondary schools respectively, set in 1949 to apply for the first time to projects started in 1951, remained in force. A school started in 1952, therefore, used about 45 per cent. less resources in labour and materials than a similar school started in 1949.

School Staffing.

In 1952, the number of teachers increased by over 5,000 to a total of about 227,000 and the staffing standard at the end of the year was slightly better than that of 1950.

It is satisfactory, when recruitment to training colleges is affected by the low birth rate of the inter-war period, that the training colleges for men teachers were practically filled in the autumn of 1952. In the women's colleges, however, there were still some 300 places vacant in September, 1952, even though admissions very nearly reached the figure for 1951. In the words of the Report: "there can be no relaxation in the efforts to fill the colleges."

There were twenty-three authorities (compared with thirty-one in 1951) who were 5 per cent. or more below their authorized establishment of women teachers; many of these authorities were still seriously short of such teachers.

Between January, 1951 and January, 1952 the reduction in the size of senior classes was maintained, but the average size of primary classes increased more sharply than in previous years with the entry into school of the larger

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number of children born in the years after the war. The total number of junior and infant classes increased from 108,629 to 112,702. The number of these classes with forty or more pupils increased from 30,662 to 35,163.

There was an appreciable increase in the number of graduate teachers with degrees in mathematics and science, but their number will need to increase more rapidly if the requirements of the schools are to be met in the coming years. There was an overall increase of 4.1 per cent. in the total number of graduate teachers in the schools.

Special Schools.

Thirty-five new special schools were opened in 1952, including twenty for educationally sub-normal children, and compared with 1951 the number of children in special schools rose from 49,054 to 51,591; but in spite of this progress there remained a big shortage of special school places.

School Health Service.

A striking development during the year was the steady recovery of the school dental service. The number of school dentists increased from 713 in January, 1952 to 850 in January, 1953. "Even so," adds the Report, "the recovery only brought the service back about two-thirds of the way from its lowest point to the highest level so far recorded—that for January, 1948."

Further Education.

In June the Government announced their proposals for improving facilities for higher technological education. The Minister's share in these proposals was to raise the rate of grant for certain types of advanced courses and research work in technical colleges from the standard rate of 60 per cent. to 75 per cent. This increased rate of grant applies to capital as well as maintenance expenditure.

The increased need for economy in educational building and the growing demand for school places in primary and secondary schools made it necessary to confine further education building to provision for a few types of technological training which had a close connection with basic industries—engineering, textiles, mining and building. Work on new construction and adaptations was completed to the value of £2,000,000, increasing to about £5,000,000 the value of work completed since the beginning of 1948.

Work started during those five years has totalled some £24,000,000.

There was a slight increase to about 54,000 in the number of full-time students at establishments for further education. The number of part-time day students continued to increase—from 305,900 in 1950-51 to 333,830 in 1951-52—and this development may account for the fact that the number of students attending evening institutes remained almost stationary at about 2,000,000. There was a small decline in the number of adult education classes provided by responsible bodies but residential colleges attracted students in increasing numbers.

Fees were raised by many local education authorities following the Minister's request for a review of the fees charged for various forms of further education. Preliminary reports suggested that attendance at vocational classes and courses were little, if at all, affected, but that non-vocational classes might show some reduction.

University Awards.

The Minister's predecessor had undertaken to offer 2,000 State Scholarships each year, but in practice the number taken up had fallen considerably short of that offered, owing to postponements for national service and other reasons. In 1952 the Minister undertook to ensure as far as possible that a total of 2,000 Scholarships would be taken up each year. As a result the number taken up in 1952 was nearly 500 more than in the previous year.

Reduction in Ministry's Staff.

The further reduction in the staff of the Ministry forecast in the 1951 Report was achieved during the year. In October, 1952, the total number of the Ministry's staff, including the Inspectorate and the two Museums, was 3,065; this was 130 less than in October, 1951, and about 23 per cent. less than was provided for in the 1948 staffing estimates.

The Report also devotes chapters to educational developments in Wales during the year and to the work of the Victoria and Albert and Science Museums.

Handicapped Children

The care of the handicapped child, says Dr. Thomas Ross, School Medical Officer for Walsall in his annual report, is now taking its place as one of the major duties of the School Health Service, a duty firmly brought into being by the Education Act of 1944. There is in any school community the child with a handicap, be it of the body or of the mind, a handicap which so interferes with the child's ability that he finds himself unable to benefit by the education given at an ordinary school. The health may be so affected that his delicate constitution may not allow him to withstand the fatigue of journeys to school or the fatigue of continuous learning during ordinary school hours. His intelligence may be insufficient for him to absorb information and learning at the speed accepted as normal for an ordinary school. In both cases, his education is disturbed, and his educational attainment falls far short of his capabilities.

The community has a duty to these children, no less than to the ordinary child, to supply, through its educational establishments, education best suited to the child's educational needs. It is for the School Medical Service, adds Dr. Ross, to so apply itself to the problem that the child is examined and assessed, that its parents and the Education Authority are so advised, that the child may receive the education most suited to his medical needs.

2,168,000 School Savers

There are now 2,168,000 members of school savings groups, an increase of 124,000 in a year. Membership of school groups now covers about 36 per cent. of the school population and more than 200,000 children joined school groups during the Recruitment Week held last autumn.

With the exception of the London Region all regions in England and Wales increased their school group membership during the year, Lancashire and Cheshire by 11.9 per cent. and the East Midlands by 10.7 per cent.

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About eight scholarships, each worth £125 a year for two years, are waiting for young men already employed in the industry, or for boys leaving Grammar and Technical Secondary Schools. Courses, at the Plastics Technology Department at the Borough Polytechnic, start from September 21st next. In many circumstances, there will be no tuition fees.

The Trustees of the Plastics Industry Education Fund have provided a sum of £2,000 for these studentships, which will lead to the examination for the diploma of the Plastics Institute. Holders of the diploma can later proceed to the associateship of the Plastics Institute.

Some of the leading firms in the plastics industry have agreed in principle that they will sponsor one or two students at the end of their first year with a view to offering them permanent employment, when the diploma has been obtained.

Applications for Studentships should be confined to boys living in the United Kingdom and having reached the standard of the General Certificate of Education (ordinary level) in Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics. The application should be made in the first instance to the Head of the Chemistry Department, The Borough Polytechnic, Borough Road, S.E.1.

The Borough Polytechnic scheme is in addition to the scheme already in existence for training grants financed by the Trustees of the Plastics Industry Education Fund.

The Trustees have already called for applications for training grants to cover the expenses of students for full-time courses at technical colleges. For 1953-54, it has been decided to allot £1,200 for expenditure on grants.

In addition, £250 will be spent on the purchase of books for the Plastics Institute head office and section libraries.

Technical Education in Scotland

To promote interest in the subject, the Scottish Education Department have produced in leaflet form a review of Technical Education in Scotland from 1800 to the present day.

The leaflet describes the development of full-time and part-time technical education provided in Scotland by central institutions, local technical colleges and education authority centres.

Discussing day release classes in Scotland the review says that the most striking development of the last half century has been in the further education of apprentices and other young people during their early years of employment. Nearly 20,000 students attended part-time day classes during the 1951-52 session compared with 5,000 in session 1946-47 and about 600 in 1939.

The review says that some education authorities have not shown all the enthusiasm they might in seeking to overcome difficulties in providing accommodation, but on the other hand they have not always received support from local industries. The growth of pre-apprenticeship and day-release courses and the establishment of local technical colleges have proceeded less rapidly than was hoped at the end of the war. If the development of technical education is to proceed in Scotland to the extent which informed opinion regards as essential, it will require both real willingness on the part of education authorities to face new tasks and also full and practical support from industry.



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ADDRESS

The Select Committee Reports

BY JUNIUS.

In its recent report on School Accommodation, the Select Committee, consisting of Socialist and Conservative members, have produced a document which, to say the least, is not very creditable to either party. Forty years ago this report would have been a fair portrayal of the state of affairs in the areas administered by most, if not all, Local Education Authorities, a position which, in view of the economic conditions, was widely accepted as the best that could be expected by the public at large, who on the whole viewed the working conditions of teachers as far superior to their own and so had little desire to assist in altering them. To-day a picture is presented of undesirable conditions existing in some areas owing to a variety of circumstances.

Party Politics.

The attempt of both parties to allocate the blame provides much ammunition for those who belong to neither party. The carefully marshalled facts are read and digested by the frustrated administrator with a sardonic chuckle and a restrained "I told them so." The foreign visitor now investigating educational problems in these isles remembers the situations he has left in his own land and wonders if his journey is really necessary. Those L.E.A.s notorious in the past as the old gang, ready to dig in at the sound of the trumpet, until positively assured that a good rousing grant will be forthcoming, will probably contrive to act according to the old time-honoured plan—do nothing unless compelled and—hope for the best. The Presidents of various educational organizations, unions or institutions, will be fully provided with material free—gratis and for nothing—on which to exercise their sarcasm or provide the headlines in the process of delivering their respective addresses. The leading articles of the press are bursting with education and ertwhile doubtful organs are now donning the mantle of cultural respectability.

Economy Measures.

Each side accuses the other of time wasting and cheese-paring tactics, of priority lists loaded against educational building, of building restrictions, of hold-ups, of hair splitting regulations, e.g., buildings for new housing but not for rehousing, and of other contrivances to assist frustration. We are reminded that the raising of the school-leaving age to 15+ decanted each year another 500,000 children into the educational system for which the necessary accommodation has not yet been forthcoming. Great efforts have been made to provide the teachers and the books, apparatus and stationery, but at least something of the order of 1,000 schools, each of 500 places, has been needed. The war has deprived us of six years of school building, the old black-listed schools have not been replaced, many places have been lost by bombing and there have been large increases in the birth rates for the years 1946, 1947 and 1948. All this involved provision, more provision and still more provision. There were many who argued for better quality education rather than for an education of a longer period but of an attenuated character. In other words they wished for good instruction up to 14 plus rather than something dependent upon improvisation with insufficient provision. Yet, among educationists in general there was a tendency to welcome the raising of the school leaving age and a desire to make the extra year worth while. Many L.E.A.s, especially those which had boldly cleared away the legacies of the past, engaged the new problem of accommodation with courage and foresight. The issue of the new Building Regulations

during a period of economic stability was almost sufficient to deter the stoutest of hearts, the inflated cost per place, the extended building periods—three years to erect a school of 850 places as against 1½ years twenty years previously—the shortage of materials, especially steel, all these were factors which when considered together comprised a most formidable and alarming list, perhaps regarded with equanimity by those who lived for the day, but with dismay by those who associated the future with interminable financial millstones.

The Old Gang.

Those L.E.A.s, and incidentally those school managers, who had slumbered and slept, now found themselves in a dilemma. The new situation was further complicated by the neglect to take advantage of past opportunities. There was an accumulation of past and present and a threat to the rates and taxes. Priorities had to be assigned to the accommodating of children for whom there were no places and who were statutorily compelled to attend school. All other building was stopped and *all* L.E.A.s desired a fair share of the priorities for *their* children in the extra age groups. So the extra groups enjoyed the latest amenities and for the children in the black-listed schools it was either black list or nothing. Having regard to the economic conditions it was difficult for the government, having decided upon a system of priorities, to vary its choice except by repealing an Act of Parliament, and this was unthinkable.

Box and Cox.

Those L.E.A.s which had built for posterity had to consider its probabilities and the intangible factors likely to emerge. The question naturally arose—"After the bulge, what?" Will the new building be wasted or will it be used to replace the accommodation which has outlived its usefulness? Or will it be apportioned for the service of youth or to extend the number of evening continuation classes? Will there be an upsurge in favour of nursery schools and classes? It is well known that the numbers of children under five admitted to the schools have greatly declined. The juniors have invaded the Infant Schools and filched sundry classrooms. In 1959 the last of the bulge will have passed through the Junior Schools and the Infants will come into their own again, unless, of course, the Junior school classes are reduced in numbers per class. But in some areas the Juniors may have to remain in the Infant rooms whilst the Secondary Modern children move into the Junior rooms and this will continue until 1963. The outlook, therefore, for the supporters of nursery classes appears to be anything but rosy. There are many teachers who would rather have larger classes and restrict the use of their school halls as the price of admitting the under fives. The Secondary Grammar School will also indirectly affect the Infant School unless there is an enhanced building programme. The chances are that many children will fail to qualify at the 11+ examination who would have qualified in previous years. These will be transferred to Secondary Modern schools who will invade the Junior schools, who in turn will invade the accommodation previously allocated to the under fives in the Infant schools. Truly a veritable Box and Cox arrangement.

Conclusion.

If we really desire to solve the problem of accommodation then it is necessary to cultivate a new spirit of approach. All those involved will have to yield something. Men cannot work without materials and work cannot be

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"pushed on" if key men absent themselves. When steel structures are standing and rusting, when contractors are awaiting the settlement of land disputes, when building is at a standstill, the public must take notice and think and in time when their own children are involved they will become vocal.

Machinery for progress must be speeded up and lubricated with the oil of good will and understanding. Otherwise it will be—back to the black list, back to the unsatisfactory halls, back to the era of oil lamps and earth closets and all this involves.

Ten Years' Growth

Building Plans for London Theological College.

The London Bible College has made immense progress during the past ten years. Throughout this period of outstanding advance the original aims and standards of the College have been fully maintained, though the dimensions of the work have developed beyond the highest hopes of its founders.

The primary and basic purpose of the College is to give men and women a thorough grounding in the all-important knowledge of the Word of God. The academic standards to which the College works are those of the highest scholastic and educational institutions in the country. The College believes that it is sensible to submit its students to the public examinations of the London University, thus affording, in that respect of its work, credentials that cannot be challenged. To this end not only are students carefully selected according to personal and spiritual and educational qualifications, but also a teaching staff has been hand-picked and is made up of men with high qualifications and teaching ability.

It will be remembered by many that the first steps towards the foundation of the College were taken in 1938, but owing to war conditions the work did not begin until 1943. In October of that year a series of public lectures was arranged by the College, and this was followed by the commencement of Evening Classes of a regular kind in April, 1944. In January, 1946, the first residential and day students gathered for their opening term in a large house kindly loaned by the China Inland Mission. In the first year came the generous offer of Mr. J. W. Laing and his firm (J. W. Laing and Son) of the free use of the premises at 19, Marylebone Road. While the promise to use the building was granted for a period of four years, the College has, through the kindness of the landlords, been permitted to remain in occupation for the past seven years. The expansion of the work made increasing demands upon space, and the present building was more than outgrown some years ago. From the small beginning of eight full-time students and one tutor in 1946, there are now over one hundred full-time and resident students and a tutorial staff of eight. To meet the demands of this greatly enlarged work, supplementary residential accommodation had to be acquired, but this was at a little distance from the College. Eighteen months ago the College was able to purchase freehold premises almost adjoining the building, and thus has been able to provide permanent hostel facilities for forty-one men students. This hostel is known as "Aldis House," and was so named in memory of the first President of the College, the Rev. W. H. Aldis.

The following figures will give some idea of the development of the work over the past seven years. 210 full-time and resident students have passed through the College; 2,000 students have attended Evening Classes; 3,000 students have enrolled for Correspondence Courses. The students come from all the major denominations and Christian bodies in the country—Church of England, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Salvation

Army, Free Evangelical Churches, and the Assemblies of the Brethren—and a number of overseas churches are also represented in the student fellowship. In the best sense of the word the College is truly interdenominational. During the past seven years forty-two students have entered the pastoral ministry in the homeland, twenty-two have gone into the schools of our country, fifty-three have gone overseas to the mission field, and ninety-three have entered other forms of Christian service in this country. Since the College first entered students for the higher University examinations four years ago, no less than twenty-six of its students have secured London University degrees in Divinity and Arts. These successes include two with first class honours, eight with second class honours, and sixteen pass degrees. In the other University Diploma and Certificate examinations over the same period the successes of the London Bible College have reached the figure of 297.

The Evening Classes of the College which are open to all members of the public are attended by teachers, preachers, Sunday School workers and others engaged in all kinds of evangelistic service. The attendances amount to some three to four hundred a week, on many occasions overcrowding the lecture halls and classrooms.

Not only is the College situated in London, but it is in the centre of London on one of the finest sites that can be thought of for such an enterprise. It is possible for the College still to retain this site and to build new and adequate premises. Factors of town planning and of financial economy require that a large building shall be erected, the cost of which is estimated to be about £200,000. It is hoped that much of the financial burden involved will be carried by building society arrangements, but an initial sum of £60,000 is required to make such a scheme sound.

The sum of £41,000 has been promised towards this initial capital outlay, but at least £19,000 has still to be found. At a recent Council Meeting of the College the unanimous resolution was made to proceed with the erection of a new building on the present site. It is hoped that licences may be procured within the next twelve months, after which the work will proceed speedily.

City as a Classroom

School Parties in Birmingham.

Schoolchildren from many parts of the country, and indeed from overseas, are going to Birmingham in increasing numbers as part of their education. During their stay in Birmingham, extending sometimes up to a week, they visit various factories and civic undertakings.

From Coventry shortly a party of boys are visiting Birmingham and their programme includes an Organ Recital in the Town Hall and visits to the Art Gallery and the Fire Station.

Uppingham School has chartered a special train to visit Birmingham for a day early in October when the parties of between 500 and 600 will divide into small groups and visit a number of factories, the Art Gallery, Civic Centre, etc.

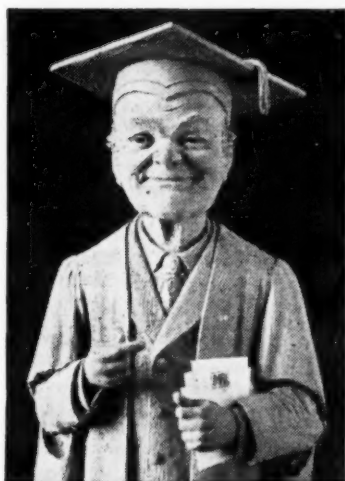
From far away Johannesburg a party of girls from Jeppe High School were in Birmingham for a week last month. Their stay in Birmingham included visits to the Council House, King Edward VI High School for Girls and Cadbury's factory where they played a netball match against the Bournville Girls' Athletic Club.

In the middle of this month, a party of thirty boys from Varndean Grammar School at Brighton will spend nearly a week in Birmingham visiting various factories, the Fire Station and the Museum of Science and Industry in Newhall Street, while from Leicester a party of girls from the Mundella Secondary Girls' School will shortly be spending a day in Birmingham which will include a visit to Aston Hall and a tour of the City Centre.

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FILM STRIP REVIEWS

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No. 6079—Trees of Britain.

This useful strip in colour is based upon the well known Puffin Picture Book of the same title. Eleven deciduous figures are shown as they appear in summer and winter, and four conifers are figured. The illustrations are all hand drawn and bring out the characteristics very well. There are close up pictures of leaves, flowers and fruit and insets show the uses to which the wood is put. 22 frames.

No. 5048—Your Parliament.

Much ground is covered by this strip which is divided conveniently into three sections: (a) The Home of Parliament, providing photographs of the building and including a plan of the Palace of Westminster and the opening of the New Commons Chamber; (b) The Growth of Parliament, from the thirteenth Century to the present day, with many illustrations from contemporary prints; and (c) Parliament at Work, including nomination of candidates, at the polls, State Opening of Parliament, seating arrangements in the Commons and Lords, the passage of a bill and the Budget. 47 frames.

No. 5050—Peoples of The Fjords.

Another strip to emphasize how the way of life is conditioned by the physical features of the country. The photographs mainly concern the More and Romsdal district and are conveniently arranged to show respectively the life on the Coast, life of the Fjords and life in the Mountains. There are some splendid photographs of mountain and valley scenery to supplement those showing the life and occupations of the people. 28 frames.

DENTAL BOARD OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

A Film Strip on Dental Care.

Produced primarily to supplement the film "Thirty-two of her Own" and issued on free loan with each copy of the film, but equally suitable for showing separately and on sale at 15s. with text. The strip is in colour and the three sections have long leaders between them so that the strip may be cut if desired. The very clear diagrams are equally suitable for Primary or Secondary scholars. Part 1—Eating the Right Foods—grouped as those which help to clean the teeth and those which help to form them; Part 2—Brushing our Teeth—showing the means of preventing decay with a useful analogy in the painting of the inside as well as the outside of a shed; Part 3—Going to the Dentist—emphasizes the importance of frequent and regular inspection. 42 frames in all.

COMMON GROUND, LIMITED

CGA 413—Life in the Spring.

A delightful strip with sparkling photographs from the very best sources. The daffodils are really pushing themselves up through fallen leaves, blossom is open wide to the sun, and the song-thrush is really singing. In many pictures there is a busy note. This is spring as it should be—not the capricious season we have so often found it to be. The resurgence of plant and animal life is well featured and explained in the text. But, Mr. Hewer, we would have liked a picture of Hawthorn blossom to make 30 frames, for, in spite of the statement "The Hawthorn rarely blooms in May even in the south of England," we have

evidence that May blossom is more true to its name than otherwise, i.e., at its best in the London area on 14th May, 1952, and 21st May, 1953.

CGA 518—Desert Landforms.

A further addition to the excellent Physical Geography Series, and a strip which plainly shows that even deserts have a beauty of their own. So many forms are included—sand, stony, rock, etc., with their varied features. The processes of erosion are well dealt with and there is a special section dealing with mountainous deserts. Many technical terms, i.e., wadis, canyon, badlands, inselberg, mesa and butte are illustrated with well selected photographs. 31 frames.

WA 660—Lorenzo De' Medici.

This is a Workshop Strip (consisting of material already produced by teachers for their own use). In this case the author is Ivy L. Mumford, M.A., Lecturer in Education, University of Nottingham and none will regret that this strip, made for personal use, is available to all. The rise of the Medici is well brought out in the lengthy introduction and it is good to find a Workshop Strip with 32 pages of script. The illustrations, mainly photographs, provide a useful background to the period. 27 frames.

CGA 204—The London Basin.

Part 3 of the Regional Geography of Great Britain revised to date with the Queen in the State procession at the opening of Parliament. The introductory frames treat of London as the Capital City. Other sections deal with the position of London, the Port, London's food, Industries old and new, to and from Work and London's Playgrounds. The 39 frames provide scenes very familiar to the Londoner (especially the rush-hour pictures), and very useful to those well away from its borders.

CGA 562—Southern Ireland.

Supplementary to the Regional Geography of Ireland, Part I—Northern Ireland—CGA 561, and designed to be used in conjunction with it. Three regional divisions are adopted—the West and S.W. Coastlands, the South-East Region and Central Ireland. Most of the photographs naturally concern agriculture and farming, though typical scenery is not ignored and there are maps of the regions, relief, the Shannon Basin and Dublin. As with Part I, there is a very full and comprehensive script. 32 frames.

Regional Geography of the World Series.

CGA 528—The Rhone Basin.

CGA 563—North German Lowlands.

CGA 559—Mediterranean Australia.

The latest additions to this excellent library of World pictures. CGA 528 affords a good example of a region with marked contrasts in structure and relief with corresponding climatic conditions—the Burgundy and Jura, French Alps, Lower Rhone and Rhone delta. 33 frames. CGA 563 deals with the part of the lowlands from the Dutch-German frontier in the west to the former German territory, now under Polish administration, in the east. The two main divisions are the southern borderlands and the coastlands, but the heath and bog regions receive attention also, and Berlin is introduced by a map showing the occupation zones. 37 frames. CGA 559 opens with a useful discussion on Mediterranean contrasts with special reference to vine production and irrigation. The two sections of Australia which call for special attention in this connection are the hinterlands of Perth and Adelaide, and both are well featured in this strip. 30 frames.



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BOOK NOTES

Secondary Modern School French, Book II, by A. Hay. (Newnes.)

This series, admirable as it is in some respects, illustrates the difficulties of teaching a foreign language in the secondary modern school. While it is possible with the non-academic type of child to avoid much formal grammar in English teaching and rely mainly for accuracy of expression on the correction of common errors, it is quite impossible (short of actually living in the country) to acquire a correct working knowledge of a foreign language without much attention to accident and syntax. Experience shows that it is hard enough, with a good deal more time to devote to the subject, to get the average grammar school class up to G.C.E. ordinary level (not a very exacting standard) by the age of sixteen. Mr. Hay has certainly produced an entertaining book from which the brighter children will derive much enjoyment and satisfaction (no bad things in themselves). But it is questionable whether anything very much of permanent value in language mastery can be achieved in this way, especially with the human material in view. Any secondary modern school head, however, who is determined that some of his pupils shall be given the opportunity to learn French will do well to look at this series: there are some very good things in it.—C.

Geography in the Primary School. Second Edition. (Geographical Association, 2s. net.)

The contribution being made to progress in educational theory and practice by the various "subject" associations is both valuable in itself and encouraging to those who believe that direction should be set by those in the field rather than imposed from above, for the dictum that spectators see most of the game has but a doubtful validity in education. It is the man, or woman, on the job to whom we must look not only for detailed blue-prints for advance in practice, but also for those broader plans which will at the same time stand the test of the classroom. (If it has done nothing else, the recent discrediting of intelligence tests as a major guide to selection has usefully shaken faith in educational theorists whose classroom experience is both scanty and remote.) It is good, therefore, that this admirable study of geography teaching as it might and should be in the primary school should once more become available. The compilers have set their sights high enough—for example, the list of equipment considered a requisite minimum will be read with rueful smiles by many a hard-pressed junior school geography specialist—but there is constant appreciation of what can and cannot be expected from children at the different ages (for example, the insistence that observed facts rather than reasons, are the natural concern of the eight year old). There are useful appendices on suitable text-books, air photographs, and ordnance survey maps.—C.

The Personal Library, by Lionel McColvin, C.B.E. (Phoenix House, 9s. 6d. net.)

One cannot begin too early in laying the foundations of a personal library. Christmas "annuals" and school stories will usually be the start—if they survive the depredations of younger brothers and sisters. Before he leaves school, however, especially if he has stayed on into the Sixth, the young book collector ought to have a useful little "library" which already reflects his personal tastes and interests, and on which he can build at the university and after. There is a danger to-day that the otherwise admirable facility with

which books can be borrowed may extinguish the habit of acquiring books of one's own. Any attempt to encourage the building up of a personal library is, therefore, eminently worth while.

Mr. McColvin, Chief Librarian of the City of Westminster, here directs the choice of those who are setting out on this task: they could make no better start to their collection than with Mr. McColvin's own book. Here is no mere catalogue, although anyone seeking a foundation book list will find as much as any limited purse can hope to achieve in many years of book-buying. Not the least value of the book lies in the highly personal running commentary, dictated by sound common sense and wide experience, about books and their authors, about book buying and borrowing, about publishers and libraries, about book collecting and, most important of all, about the part books and reading can play in our lives. It is the general reader the author has chiefly in mind, although he gives much help in passing to the specialist in tracking down his requirements. A most useful addition to the school library (which one feels sure the librarian will be the first to borrow).—C.

How Russia is Ruled, by Walter Kolarz. (Batchworth, 7s. 6d. net.)

The bright orange cover with its white question mark of the Background Books is becoming almost as familiar in discussion groups and current affairs classes as were the multi-coloured pamphlets of the sadly defunct Bureau of Current Affairs. From time to time the publishers of Background Books bring out a fuller, more ambitious study of some more permanent problem—a Background Special. This latest issue meets a much-felt need, a clear statement from authentic sources of what is really happening in Russia under Communism. The author is not unbiased, but he has attempted to be objective. The volume is based on a series of talks broadcast in the Overseas Service of the B.B.C. under the title "Communism in Practice." All the factual material was taken from Soviet newspapers and journals, Soviet textbooks and other official Soviet publications. Due allowance is given for the enormous leeway any government taking over from the Czars had to make up, but the picture that emerges is not a pleasant one to a reader brought up in the traditions of Western civilization. The amazing thing is, not that such a system should have been acceptable among a people knowing no better, but that it should find its advocates and defenders in Western Europe.—C.

Elementary Science for Technical Students, by W. N. Farrell. (Basil Blackwell, 4s. 6d. net.)

A most useful book. The normal physics and chemistry and general science manuals are too bulky and detailed for use in evening classes with Preliminary technical students. Mr. Farrell's carefully pruned and balanced course, with explanatory matter and experiments, summaries of "facts to remember" (which save the students much time-wasting note-taking) and its practical exercises should be a boon to the evening class lecturer harassed by the amount of ground to be covered in a limited time with often none too promising human material. We are aware how expensive science books are to produce, but it is a pity that, since many of its potential users will be buying their own text-books, the publishers have not found it possible in this instance to keep the price a little lower.—C.

Curtain Up, by Thomas Cain. (University of London Press, 2s. 9d. net.)

This is the third of Mr. Cain's collections of "ten minute plays," and for those who know the earlier volumes it is sufficient recommendation to say that the standard is well maintained. They are not ambitious essays in drama—ten minute plays for schoolchildren could scarcely be that.

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But they are highly polished within their limitations. Each has a distinct and well-developed plot, firmly-drawn characters, and succeeds in creating a convincing atmosphere. The dialogue is direct and forceful, the technique being that of the poster rather than the miniature. Although well within the range of the actors and actresses for whom they are intended, they never have any suggestion of "writing down." Can the publishers now produce, at reasonable cost, the complete series in one volume? This would be helpful to the single-sex schools, for whom some only of the plays in each volume are suitable.—C.

* * *

Through the City, by A. W. Carter, B.Sc. (Newnes, 7s.)
Through Living Things, by Eileen Evans, B.Sc. (Newnes, 6s.)

To the Greek, science was knowledge—knowledge of the world around him and of man himself. He observed the phenomena of his environment and drew his conclusions. The "approach to science" adopted in the series of which these two volumes are part, is therefore no new thing. The tradition of science teaching in our secondary schools, however, has laid greatest stress on pure science, influenced doubtless by methods current in the older elements in the curriculum. The wide expansion of secondary education following on the 1944 Act, together with the provision for the first time of science laboratories and equipment for pupils not aiming at academic distinction, has led to a revival of the realistic approach to science of the Greeks. The familiar divisions into physics, chemistry, biology and so on disappear. Instead, the pupil is invited to look around him at the real world, his curiosity is stimulated as to why things are as they are or happen as they do. In the early experimental stages of the new types of secondary school, the science teachers had to feel their own way, to plan and order their own schemes of work. Now they are becoming increasingly well served by courses such as this admirable "Approach to Science" series.

A glance at one chapter in the volume "Through the City" will explain its method. The chapter is headed "Electric Lighting" (not, be it noted, the more abstract "Electricity"). It opens with a brief, readable account of the evolution of the electric lamp. Short paragraphs follow on such matters as electric charges, current, wireless valves, resistance, circuits, lightning, about which the pupil may be expected to want to know. There is practical instruction on simple tasks such as replacing a fuse, and advice on safety precautions. Some theory there is, e.g., a clear exposition of Ohm's law, but it grows out of the practical work. Finally, there are twenty "things to do yourself" involving only easily accessible apparatus and materials. A similar method is followed in the other new volume in the series, "Through Living Things." Here the emphasis is naturally on biology, but the aim is still that the child should understand and get the best out of himself and his environment rather than that he should acquire a neatly organized body of information. We look forward to seeing further volumes in this series of "text-books with a difference."—C.

* * *

What is the Colombo Plan? by Guy Wint. (Batchworth Press, 1s. 6d. net.)

A further title in the admirable current affairs pamphlets, "Background Books." A study of the origins and aims of the Plan by an expert on Asian affairs.

The estimates of the Education (Scotland) Fund indicate that a sum of £29,080,000 will be available for grants to education authorities in respect of their financial year 1953-54. This sum exceeds by £2,090,000 the closely estimated cost of the grants payable in respect of the year 1952-53—states a circular issued to education authorities by the Scottish Education Department.

Broadcasts to Schools, 1953-54

There are now 25,691 schools registered as listening to School Broadcasts as compared with 24,417 a year ago and the Annual Programme of Broadcasts to Schools for 1953-54, which has just been published, gives details of the broadcast series from which they will be able to select.

A major change this year is the new School Broadcasting timetable based on a detailed survey of school timetables. The School Broadcasting Council gave schools advance notice of this change in March.

Other changes include the replacement of the ten-minute News Commentaries, which in 1952-3 have been broadcast twice a week, by a series of weekly twenty-minute broadcasts for children of about twelve designed to interest them in topical matters. This series will be called "Current Affairs I." The existing long established and widely used "Current Affairs" series for children of thirteen and fourteen will now be called "Current Affairs II."

The series "For the Fourteens" will, in 1953-54, be broadcast in the Autumn Term only in order to make room for two experimental series each lasting a term. In the Spring Term "Know Your Neighbourhood," planned for children of eleven to thirteen, is intended for use by teachers wishing to undertake local studies with their classes. It has been planned with both town and country schools in mind. The Summer Term series, "Monday Miscellany," is intended for less able children of Secondary school age and it is hoped that the programmes will help to enrich their experience and to stimulate classroom discussion and follow-up activity within the limits of their capacity.

The Religious Service broadcast on Tuesday and Friday mornings has been the subject of a special review during the past year. More children join in this Service than listen to any other broadcast to schools and the many teachers who co-operate in this act of worship will no doubt welcome the decision to publish a pamphlet (price 3d.) containing the less well-known hymns used in the Service and the words of the prayers to be said together.

The B.B.C. will continue to publish illustrated pupils' pamphlets to accompany a number of broadcast series. The discount to schools ordering pamphlets for all three terms is being increased from 10 per cent. to 20 per cent. and the price of the pamphlet for "Looking at Things" will be reduced from 2s. 0d. to 1s. 6d.

The School Broadcasting Council for Scotland, who included four experimental programmes for less able children in their broadcasts for Junior Secondary schools last Summer Term, are introducing in 1953-4 a new series planned specifically for children of I.Q. 80-90 in the second year of the Junior Secondary school under the title "Round and About." This series will replace "Scottish Affairs."

There are no changes in the series provided for schools in Wales.

Educational Films in Hungary

Education by film and film strips, begun by the Ministry of Education in Hungary in June last year, is making rapid progress.

This year four big educational films, consisting of eleven parts, are being prepared. They are "Sulphuric Acid Production," "Basic Ideas of Geography," "Radio Broadcasting and Recording," and "The Theory of Flying."

In addition 100 film strips will be made, in 500 copies each.

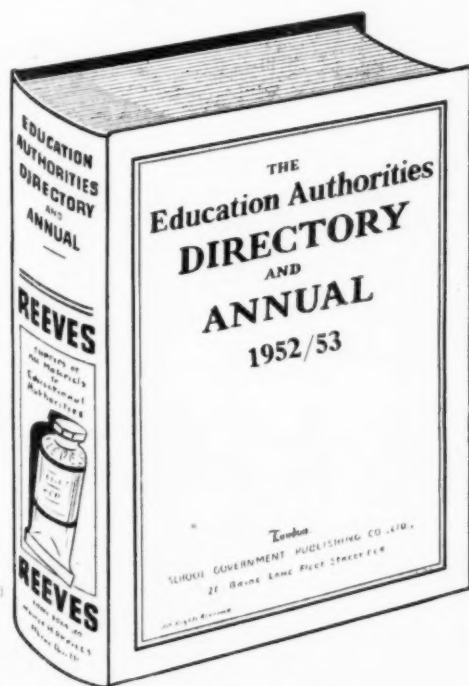
Last year films were made on the solar system, oil production and refining, and plastics. Film strips produced in 1952 included 42 on biology, 16 on history, 20 on constitutional law and 14 on geography.

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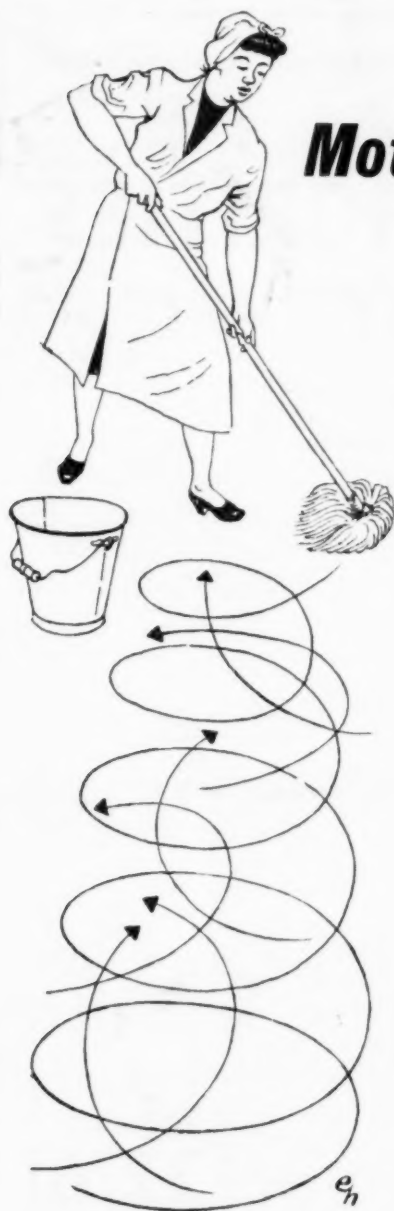
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